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ABSTRACT

The director of a child care center implemented and evaluated a 10-week practicum intervention designed to provide orientation and training experiences for the center's staff. About one third of the staff were part-time college students; one third were full-time workers with no degree; and one third were full-time professionals with college degrees. Topics covered by the intervention were: (1) classroom management; (2) daily routines and schedules; (3) record keeping; (4) duties outside the classroom; (5) teaching strategies; and (6) professionalism. Subtopics were developed in each of the six areas. Delivery was provided mainly through on-the-job training by mentors. Practicum evaluation data indicated that the intervention was successful. Staff increased in their knowledge of child development, their confidence in their ability to teach young children, their professional attitudes, and their use of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies. (RH)

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Instituting Staff Training In A Large Child Care Center Through Development Of A Personalized Orientation Plan

by

Gail Shreders

Cohort XXXV

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Master's Program for Child and Youth Care Administrators in
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for the Degree of Master of Science

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AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

4-11-90
Date

Signature of Student

Abstract

Instituting Staff Training In A Large Child Care Center Through Development Of A Personalized Orientation Plan. Shreders, Gail. 1990: Practicum Report, Nova university, Master's Program for Child Care Administrators. Descriptors: Early Childhood Education/ Staff Development/ Staff Training/ Orientation/ Inservice/ Demonstration/ Continuing Education/ Child Care Center/ Career/ Staff Turnover/ Staff Retention/ Professionalism/ Teaching Strategies/ Developmentally Appropriate Practices/ On-The-Job Training/ Mentor/

Due to insufficient time and resources there was a lack of consistent personalized orientation and training at the child care center. Staff needed to learn appropriate methods of child management as well as routines and other responsibilities at the center. Information was collected from the staff in order to determine their needs concerning the delivery of inservice education.

The author designed and implemented a ten week orientation which consisted of six main topics of staff development. The delivery of information to new employees was mostly through on-the job training provided by mentors. The author supervised the mentors and the new employees. Individual needs of staff were met by providing resources as indicated within the overall framework.

Data from surveys indicated a successful orientation and inservice training experience in which employees had a measurable increase of knowledge of child development and confidence in their abilities to teach young children. Surveys also showed a marked improvement in professional attitude and developmentally appropriate teaching strategies of the staff.

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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND

School And Community Setting

The work setting is a large not-for-profit child care center which serves the community of a small city of approximately 50,000 people. It is one of three centers in the city which can accommodate over 100 children. There are three slightly smaller franchise centers in the community with capacities of 100 children. In addition, there are numerous smaller programs, most of which are operated by not-for-profit organizations.

The work setting is located next to the municipal hospital and is near the majority of medical buildings in the city. It is also within two miles of the state university, which is the city's largest industry. The policy of the board of directors is that the center serve a well balanced segment of the population of the city. The staff and the clientele are comprised of a varied assortment of people from different environments.

Approximately one-third of the staff are part time college students, one-third are full time workers with no college degrees and one-third are full time professionals who have college degrees. The staff cultural and social mix closely reflects the variety of attending families. Different types of people share the common goal of caring for young children in this facility.

The child care center staffing composition is as follows: There are eight head teachers who are full time, one full time

cook, one or two part time custodians, one full time administrative assistant, and one full time director. There are approximately twenty teacher's aides, two secretarial aides, and one cook's aide. Fifteen of the teacher's aides are part time positions, and three to five are full time. Ten of the part time positions are often filled by the college students.

The program was initiated nearly 20 years ago in order to serve working and student families. Mostly traditional five day a week care is offered. There are a limited number of part time preschool slots available for families which do not need full time child care. There are a limited number of alternate day care slots available to students who need only Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday and Thursday slots. There are also several half day Monday through Friday slots available for kindergarten and part time preschool children.

The center is designated by the state department of taxation as an educational institution. The director and the board of directors are committed to providing an educational as well as a nurturing and socially stimulating program. Since an influx of profit-making centers in the community in 1982, the board of director's and staff at the center have felt the need to distinguish themselves as being more than just a provider of custodial child care. In order to market the center as such, the board has felt the need to assure themselves and the public that the center is what it purports to be: a <u>learning</u> center.

Role and Responsibilities of the Writer

The writer is the director of the child care center. She is in charge of the daily operation of the facility. She is also responsible to the board of directors for the children's curriculum and the development of the staff as well as the routine financial management.

As a non-voting member of the board, she is expected to present non-biased information and her own personal opinion to the board. That body sets policy based upon the director's information as well as on surveys and other evaluation tools. During the ten years that she has been at the center, the director has been given a growing amount of responsibility in the decision making regarding center policy.

Her role at the center is typical of many directors roles: dealing with a wide variety of problems and concerns in a limited amount of time and with a limited amount of money. She is responsible for hiring and supervising staff, overseeing the expenditures of government funds, developing and implementing programs for children, supervising the maintenance of staff and children's records, reporting to the board and to licensing agencies and maintaining good parent and community relations.

The director's many responsibilities, together with the inevitable small crises that arise on an intermittent and unpredictable basis, unfortunately take away precious time that could be utilized to nurture such an environment.

The best personal resources that the director brings to her job are her interpersonal style and her practicality. She has helped the center grow from a medium sized (66 child) center into the second largest child care facility in the city with a capacity of 130 full time children. Originally housed in the cramped quarters of a school wing of a church located in the downtown area, the center is now located in the much larger space within the old hospital building.

The director has not lost sight of either the positive or negative qualities which the smaller environment in the church provided. While the move to a larger building has provided a great many opportunities and challenges, it has also brought organizational difficulties as well as the realization that it was absolutely necessary to grow in order to survive financially. The director would like to foster the positive qualities that she had experienced while working in a small group setting, and at the same time take advantage of the opportunities that a larger organization provides.

Chapter 2

IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT THE PROBLEM

Description of the Problem

The problem that existed was inadequate orientation and inadequate inservice training. Components of the problem were a lack of sufficient time to provide for orientation training and ongoing staff development, and an insufficiency of resources to provide such orientation and training.

When staff were hired they were given a packet of materials. State and local agencies require employees to complete forms which are in the packet. The three orientation materials which were included were the staff handbook, the personnel policies and the parent handbook. These materials are conscientiously updated as policies are added, dropped or changed. The materials provided most of the orientation for teacher's aides and for head teachers.

The staff handbook is a manual which describes basic rules and regulations for the safe and orderly management of children. Such topics as play yard rules, eating, health and safety rules and organization of children's groups are described in the handbook. The personnel policy manual includes job descriptions, benefits, staff licensing requirements and other contractual concerns as well as basic rules of adult conduct allowed at the center.

The effectiveness of these materials, however, are somewhat limited. They are most useful in the dissemination of objective information. They are less effective when disseminating information related to quality job performance. Furthermore, although the reading is required, the administrators at the center believe that not all of the materials are read and that the materials that are read are not always retained and carried over into practice. Before the beginning of the practicum there had been no follow up to assure that the materials had been read and understood.

Issues presented in the staff handbook that the director felt needed better definition are those that follow:

1. appropriate behavior management techniques
2. appropriate handling of daily routines
3. duties outside the classroom
4. professional staff and parent relations
5. fostering positive self images in children

Documentation of the Problem

Qualifications of Applicants and Hired Staff

A review of personnel records showed that the qualifications of most aide applicants were minimal, therefore showing that it was difficult to hire a well trained staff necessary to provide quality care to children at the center. At the beginning of the practicum there were

four aides employed that had no prior work experience or early childhood education.

Personnel records also showed that few head teacher applicants had combined education, training and experience. Only four head teachers hired at the center in the last eight years had degrees in early childhood education, education certificates from the state of Kansas and at least one year of preschool level experience. The majority of teacher applicants hired had either the required amount of education for the position or had some classroom experience with a similar age group. It is unusual to find applicants and hire teachers with both early childhood education and experience.

Wage and Salary Review

A review of hourly wages for aides and salaries for teaching staff showed that pay was significantly lower compared to teaching salaries and paraprofessional hourly wages at the local public schools. The administrators at the center find it difficult to compete for the more qualified personnel available in the area. In addition, this wage disparity engenders a faster than normal rate of staff turnover.

Informal exit interviews held with workers upon separation from employment revealed higher compensation opportunity elsewhere as motivation for change.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (1985) reported that wages paid for child day care services had only increased 34.4% in the period from 1975 to 1985, while wages paid to the service economy as a whole had increased at close to triple (95.8%) the rate of those workers.

Surveys

Feedback from a staff attitude and professional goal pretest survey administered in July, 1989 revealed satisfaction with the work site but showed that few staff members considered their child care employment as a career goal.

Table 1

Staff Attitude and Professional Goal Survey

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Question						
A	0	5	3	9	12	29
B	0	2	7	10	10	29
C	0	1	7	14	7	29
D	0	3	7	13	6	29
E	0	2	3	10	14	29
F	0	0	5	12	12	29
G	4	4	5	3	13	29
Totals	4	17	37	71	74	203
Percent	1.97%	8.37%	18.23%	34.98%	36.45%	100.00%

Questions which are attached as Appendix A: 33 reflect responses from 29 staff members concerning their attitudes toward their jobs at the center and about their careers as early childhood education professionals.

A staff orientation survey also administered in July, 1989, revealed that a significant number of employees did not feel that they had received a good orientation when they were hired. Results from the survey also reflected that the staff handbook was not always read. When it was read, the contents were not necessarily retained. The complete survey is found in Appendix B: 34. These results are reflected in Table 2:

Table 2

Staff Orientation Survey

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Question						
A.	1	9	9	7	3	29
B.	3	4	4	3	15	29
C.	3	6	9	10	1	29
D.	1	4	5	4	15	29
Totals	8	23	27	24	34	116
Percent	6.90%	19.83%	23.28%	20.69%	29.31%	100.00%

Responses were rated from one to five with five being the most favorable. Question A asked if the employee received good orientation when the person was hired, B asked if the employee read the handbook, C asked if the employee remembered the contents of the handbook, and D asked if the employee knew what was expected of him or her when hired.

Analysis of the Problem

The problem of inadequate orientation and ongoing inservice training for staff existed for many reasons. The first reason is that it is difficult to find the time to provide orientation for new staff. The center operates year round with no official end or beginning of a school year. There is no quiet interval during which staff orientations or inservice meetings may be freely scheduled. Orientations and inservices thus cannot be conveniently planned because the center is not closed prior to the start of a new school year. Closing days are dependent upon national holidays, during which the staff cannot reasonably be required or expected to attend meetings.

As the child care center grows, the director finds that less time is available for her to give personalized orientation for new staff members. The recent growth of the center has increased the amount of time that the director spends in other areas of the program, such as program planning, parent education, and financial planning. The

addition of six new positions has also created more need for staff training.

It is difficult to gather employees together when problems arise unexpectedly. Teachers must remain in their classrooms with the children because state regulations require that staff/child ratios be maintained at all times. It is difficult as well as financially impractical to hire substitute staff so that teachers and aides can train while classrooms are in operation.

There was a need to more fully train nearly half of the aides because of their lack of training in the field of early childhood education. Those employees frequently had minimal or no classroom experience with teaching and caring for young children. They are typically high school graduates who can work when more experienced or better educated staff are not available. Due to the need to maintain the staff/child ratio requirements at all hours of the program, personnel are sometimes hired simply because they are available, while preferred applicants who are often college students are usually scheduled in the afternoon.

Another reason for inadequate orientation and ongoing staff training is the frequent turnover of staff, particularly entry level teacher's aides. The Monthly Labor Review (1984) reports that child care workers have among the highest rates of job turnover of all occupations. As mentioned above, salaries in the child care profession

compare unfavorably to those of similar professions. It is not unusual for head teachers to work a year or two at the center to gain experience and then get a job with the public school district.

The literature also reflects some common reasons for exiting the field of child care. Whittaker (1971) reported that:

> The sheer physical and mental effort required to work with children in a group life setting makes retirement at age 25 a reasonable goal....There is no career ladder to climb, no salary increases beyond a certain point....Unfortunately, some (workers) feed into the whole myth that child care work is by definition something you do in your early twenties unless you are able to get work elsewhere.

Along with the issue of inadequate pay, there is the issue of turnover due to college schedules. Whittaker further reported:

> It is also true that many child care workers lead a double life as students, and this tends to cause rapid turnover in the ranks of people who graduate and move on to new professions.

College student's hours of employment are affected by their college class schedules. Students typically work at the center for one or two semesters. Out of approximately 33 employees, there are typically nine that leave each May. Nine staff members leave in August; five leave in December. Among the non-student aide workers, retention is somewhat longer. Non-student aides sometimes work for a year or more.

Chapter 3

GOALS AND OUTCOME OBJECTIVES

Statement of Goals

The goal of this practicum was to provide an effective, meaningful method of orientation and ongoing staff training at the center which was not clearly learned by staff through written materials alone. After participating in the 10 week implementation period the staff members met the following practicum objectives:

1. New employees are able to summarize the school policies as stated in the handbook and measured by the staff orientation survey in Appendix B and the staff inservice survey in Appendix C.

2. Given the evaluation in Appendix D before and after the orientation and training program, the staff members improved their level of expertise in handling problem situations.

3. Employees increased basic knowledge of job responsibilities as measured by responses on staff attitude survey in Appendix A and staff orientation survey in Appendix B.

4. Employees exhibited professional behavior in regard to the children and to the parents. The checklist presented in Appendix D, which was adapted from the NAEYC's guidelines

for developmentally appropriate practices and also from Morrison. measured an improvement in performance of professional behavior.

5. Employees exhibited more basic knowledge of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies on the checklist adapted from the NAEYC's guidelines as measured in Appendix D.

Evaluation Methods

Three methods of evaluation were used to measure the achievement of these objectives.

1. Staff who had participated in orientation and training were expected to score at least three points higher on responses three, four and five of the staff attitude survey posttest with a concomitant reduction of responses on numbers one and two of the pretest survey.

2. Posttest scores of the staff orientation survey were expected to be at least five points higher on responses four and five with a concomitant reduction of responses on numbers one two and three of the pretest survey.

3. Posttest scores of the teaching strategy and professional behavior checklist in Appendix D improved by at least three affirmative responses.

Chapter 4

SOLUTION STRATEGIES

Information Collection

Information concerning the wide variety of staff development programs is abundant in the literature. Every issue of the popular magazine Child Care Information Exchange (CCIE) has an article relating to the subject of staff training or staff development. There are diverse publications which discuss staff development and training designs. The importance of developing staff training programs is becoming increasingly recognized. As more children are served by early childhood programs there is a growing demand for high quality, competent personnel in all areas of the field (Kostelnik 1980).

Concerning the controversy over the type and amount of training needed for child care workers, Krause-Eheart (1987) stated that "as we find out more about effective teaching practices to be used with preschoolers, our teacher trainer programs will change."

A review of the literature shows that a popular method of staff training is developed through a series of one or two hour classes or workshops on topics which are perceived to be most needed by the particular audience. In a doctoral thesis, Adams (1986) created a series of evening training

sessions which occurred over a ten week period. Adams developed the topics for individual sessions by administering a child development knowledge test to the staff. Topics on which the staff had received the lowest scores were discussed at weekly training sessions.

Common training methods listed by Kostelnik (1980) and Snow (1982) included conferences, workshops, consultant visits, junior college or university classes and inservice presentations by center personnel. Another common training method is the use of the laboratory (lab) school which is a teaching model used in the clinical practicum.

On-the-Job training (OTJ) has become a viable method of providing inexpensive, practical training.

> Child care workers are experienced motivators (sic) of children. Using them to train new employees gives them experience in adult motivation and may help them to become competent supervisors. (Doriety, 1988).

Other benefits of OTJ training include individualized instruction and the ability to provide continuous feedback. New strategies can focus on present and potential problem areas. Suggested changes can take into account the need of individual children, parents, and limits and strengths of center facilities and support staff (Kostelnik, p.2).

As video equipment becomes more reasonably priced, prepared tapes have been produced by educational organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Subject matter ranges

from curriculum (Block Play, Developmentally Appropriate Practice), to classroom management. One series produced by the NAEYC is composed of discussions with leading mentors in the field of early childhood education such as Katz and Caldwell.

For the growing teacher, critical examination may occur through the use of video recorders:

> (V)ia videotape playback, it is possible to observe and study our teaching behavior from a variety of angles to see without personal distortion to what extent our teaching is congruent with what we feel we should be doing. (Wasserman, 1985, p. 335)

Florida State University's Center for Instructional Development and Services (CIDS) videodisc pilot training program was described by Petty (1986), as cited by Davis Dike, as a program that provides active participation in an employability skills instruction package for the Job Partnership Training Act (JPTA) students. Petty stated that visual and auditory prompts encourage:

> students to actively take part in gaming activities and simulations of real life situations. Reinforcement, praise, success, and controllable pace were reported as helping economically disadvantaged, hard to hire, unskilled adult students.

Katz (1977) formulated six principles of staff development which focus on the needs and strengths of the teacher. Vandervan (1979), emphasized the relationship between the workers' own potentials for personal and professional growth and their abilities to achieve benefits

for children. Neugebauer (1975) stated that a center must be well organized and its staff well organized in order to be effective and to give quality care to children.

Solution Strategies

The writer is in agreement with Davis-Dike (1987) who asserted that with all the problems facing day care today:

> ...it is perhaps unrealistic to assume that the perfect training program can be standardized and put easily into practice. Problems such as meager financial capabilities, difficulties of attracting and keeping quality staff, and basic lack of a national policy and a clear model for child care all contribute to an unpredictable training climate.

The problem of delivering more frequent and timely orientation and training to staff cannot be solved completely. The practicum plan has, however, measurably improved the situation. Due to the fact that one of the director/writer's identified strengths is her ability to work constructively with people, it was her desire to establish more personal contact between herself and the staff. She realized that time constraints limited the frequency of contact that she would reasonably be able to spend with the staff.

Therefore, the first of two tasks needed to solve the problem was to design an orientation package. With the help of experienced staff, the director was able to spend useful time with new staff members. She tracked the new employee's development, especially through the initial weeks of

employment, by the use of a notebook for each new staff member. She shared the notebooks with the respective mentors so that by the end of the practicum implementation period, there was complete documentation of orientation and inservice provided.

The second task of the solution strategy was to identify various effective methods of delivering ongoing inservice training. The staff inservice survey was the most useful method of determining the types of inservice which were most popular among the staff in general.

Implementation

Orientation Package

Components of the orientation package were as follows:

1. A guide was developed which described initial procedures required of new staff. Implementation of the practicum was explained at a staff meeting prior to the starting date.
2. A tour was given to each new employee by the director or the administrative assistant before the employee's first work day. One tour was given by a mentor.
3. A time line was constructed to reinforce completion of the check list. The director, with the help of office staff, made certain that new staff members were provided with all current written materials. Each mentor was given a copy of pages 19 through 23 of the practicum proposal as a guide to implementation of the orientation package.

4. A mentor system was developed in order to facilitate contact will new employees at crucial moments and to involve more experienced staff. Problems that new staff encountered were worked on at early stages of the practicum so that patterns of behavior that were not effective were not reinforced.

During the ten week practicum period the director provided written and verbal information to all staff concerning the following topics chosen and included in the orientation checklist. Brief interviews were held with new staff in order to establish reliability between the mentor's concerns and their own concerns. The checklist topics describe procedures and policies which are adapted from Fowler (1983):

1. Classroom Management
2. Daily Routines and Schedules
3. Record Keeping
4. Duties Outside of Classroom
5. Teaching strategies
6. Professionalism

Subtopics were developed in each of the six areas. Each checklist topic was presented to new employees on a week by week basis in the order listed above. Classroom management, the first topic, is an important and difficult area to master, therefore more time was allowed in that area. In fact, some mentors used periods of following weeks to help

new employees master group behavior.

Weeks #1 and #2

The first two weeks were spent reviewing classroom management by discussion of management subtopics and problems that arose in the classroom. The subtopics for discussion and review were: group needs versus individual needs, necessity of establishing routines, use of transitional activities, voice level of staff member, learning to give positive directions, communication among staff while in the classroom. A pretest of the professionalism and teaching strategy checklist (Appendix D: 31) was given to all staff members during the first two weeks.

Week #3

The third week was spent having the new staff read pertinent materials and by having discussions with a mentor. Please Don't Sit On The Kids by Cherry (1983) and Think Of Something Quiet, also by Cherry (1981) were especially popular and effective books. The third week was also used for evaluation of the progress of the new employees in the area of classroom management. The director observed new employees and met with mentors to discuss progress with classroom management and effective discipline.

The mentor system was developed in order to assure use of the orientation package. Each new employee had a support person other than the director to review policies and

procedures. The mentor was preferred to be a staff member who worked in the same classroom as the new employee. The mentor was a person who had knowledge of and experience with quality delivery of child care and parent relations. In one situation it was not possible to match the new employee with a staff member who worked in the same classroom. A mentor was chosen from a nearby classroom.

The idea of using a mentor as a OTJ trainer came from reviewing Doriety (1987), who supported the use of a supervisor to review unclear situations, and from Kostlenik (1980), who stated that "strategies which can be demonstrated have a higher rate of internalization than those that are simply explained or discussed." Staff who acted as mentors to new employees felt more rewarded by their own performances.

Week #4

The fourth week was spent learning daily routines and schedules such as greeting children and parents, early morning activities, circle times, meal routines, toilet routines, nap time, day end closing. During the fourth week two aide positions changed. The new employees were included in the practicum without being evaluated by the professionalism and teaching strategies survey.

Week #5

The fifth week was spent learning such necessary record keeping as daily attendance, nap charts, meal counts,

medication forms, bathroom charts, and skill assessments. New staff were able to start classroom management as well.

Weeks #6 and #7

The sixth and seventh weeks were spent on the checklist topic of professionalism. Subtopics were: confidentiality, non-judgmental attitudes, constructive communication among staff, relating pertinent problems to the proper authority and proper parent staff communications. Specific problems that had occurred during the past weeks were discussed.

Week #8

The eighth week was devoted to duties outside the classroom. Snack kitchen clean up, staff meeting attendance, community area clean up, parent education bulletin board and closing of the center were subtopics.

Week #9

The ninth week was used to educate and train the new staff members in the area of the center's purpose, goals, and philosophy which are listed in the parent handbook and the brochure which are part of the staff packet. The concept of encouraging a positive self image in individual children was related to everyday routines and to developmentally appropriate teaching strategies.

Week #10

The tenth and final week was spent evaluating the effectiveness of the practicum implementation program. It was also spent tying up loose ends. The director and the

mentors checked the notebooks for omissions of topics.

Step #1: All staff members were given a posttest of the staff attitude and professional goal survey and the staff orientation survey used to measure the effectiveness of the practicum plan. Staff members were also given a posttest of the professional and teaching strategy checklist.

Step #2: An inservice survey (Appendix C:35) was administered in order to collect information from all staff regarding future orientation and ongoing inservice training. Only 23 posttests were returned. They were not marked in such a way as to track the ones which were not returned. Future surveys will be marked to protect anonymity but also ensure better retrieval.

Follow-on

At the end of the ten week implementation period the goals of the practicum project were met. Effective meaningful orientation and ongoing staff training were provided in areas of early childhood education that are not clearly learned by staff through written materials alone.

A successful orientation program and development of ongoing inservice training improves the quality of care given to the children at the center. Employees who learn to master their employment skills are encouraged to stay at the job site for longer periods of time. Continued personalized orientations should be reflected in other evaluations of the

program such as parent surveys and informal verbal feedback.

Based on the clear evidence of success of the practicum project, the orientation package will be used with all new staff in the future. Experienced staff will facilitate the program, thus encouraging them professionally while providing a meaningful training experience without an unreasonable outlay of time and expense. It is likely that this plan will work in centers where the staff work well together and have a director who is able to foster a style of staff development such as the team spirit model described by Neugebauer (1983).

Chapter 5

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Posttest results of the staff attitude and professional goal survey reflect significant increases in responses three, four and five with a concomitant reduction of responses on numbers one and two of the pretest survey.

Table 3

Posttest of Staff Attitude and Professional Goal Survey

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Total
A.	0	1	4	0	14	23
B.	0	0	1	8	14	23
C.	0	0	3	12	8	23
D.	0	0	6	12	5	23
E.	0	0	2	0	19	23
F.	0	0	1	8	14	23
G.	0	2	4	8	9	23
Totals	0	3	21	54	83	161
Percent	0.00%	1.86%	13.04%	33.54%	51.55%	
Change	-100.00%	-77.75%	-28.44%	-4.10%	41.42%	

Responses are compared by percentages due to the fact that only 23 staff members returned the posttest survey.

The results of the comparison of responses between the staff orientation survey pretest and posttest survey also show a significant change from negative to positive as

represented in table four below.

Table 4

Posttest of Staff Orientation Questionnaire

Question	Response 1	2	3	4	5	Total
A.	1	3	7	5	7	23
B.	0	0	0	8	15	23
C.	0	1	8	9	5	23
D.	0	2	3	7	11	23
Totals	1	6	18	29	38	92
Percent	1.09%	6.52%	19.57%	31.52%	41.30%	100.00%
Change	-84.24%	-67.11%	-15.94%	52.36%	40.92%	

Results from the posttest of the professionalism and teaching strategy checklist shown in Appendix G: 41, also show a significant change from negative to positive responses. The percentage figures at the bottom of table five refer to the percentage of change from negative to positive responses. Posttest scores on the two surveys and the checklist from negative to positive responses dramatically signify the constructive effect of the practicum orientation.

Responses to the first statement of the staff inservice survey in Appendix E: 38, "I get enough inservice training" confirm that the staff members agree strongly with that statement. Future orientation and ongoing inservice

education will be planned with these results in mind.

Conclusions

The goals of the practicum were met. Data from the surveys indicated a successful orientation and inservice training experience in which employees had a clearly measurable increase of knowledge of child development and confidence in their abilities to teach young children. The surveys also showed a marked improvement in professional attitude and developmentally appropriate teaching strategies of the staff. Demonstration of ideas are more easily integrated than those that are merely discussed. Staff members who acted as mentors do feel more confident and able to help train other staff members.

Recommendations

Two of the evaluation instruments should be changed in order to achieve more clear scores. Appendix A: 33, statement letter D should read "I am knowledgeable about child development". The word very should be omitted. Appendix D: 36 should have a format of scoring which is the numerical grading from one through five instead of the yes or no format. It was difficult to score each statement as an absolute value.

The personalized orientation should be used for each new staff member. The assigned mentor should be given a revised orientation guide which is found in Appendix F: 39

and uses the week by week format of checklist topics. A notebook for each new employee can be kept to document discussions, demonstrations and use of related materials. It is also possible that some of the orientation package will be counted as inservice hours which are required of staff by state licensing agencies. The director or other supervisor needs to be part of the ongoing process, not only to give practical support but also to insure conscientious performance of the task.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Staff Attitude and Professional Goal Survey

Please rate the following statements as being more less true. A score of 1 means that the statement is not at all true and a score of 5 means that the statement is absolutely true. Please circle the correct number.

A. Child Care personnel are professionals.

1 2 3 4 5

B. My job is rewarding.

1 2 3 4 5

C. I am valued and respected at my job.

1 2 3 4 5

D. I am very knowledgeable regarding child development.

1 2 3 4 5

E. I know what is expected of me at my job.

1 2 3 4 5

F. This is a good place for me now.

1 2 3 4 5

G. I want to pursue/continue a career in child development.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B: Staff Orientation Survey

Please rate the following statements as being more or less true. A score of 1 means that the statement is not true and a score of 5 means that the statement is absolutely true. Please circle the correct number.

A. I received good orientation when I was hired.

1 2 3 4 5

B. I read all of my staff handbook.

1 2 3 4 5

C. I remember the contents of my staff handbook.

1 2 3 4 5

D. I understood what was expected of me before I was hired.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix C: Staff Inservice Survey

Please rate the following statements as being more or less true. A score of 1 means that the statement is not true and a score of 5 means that the statement is absolutely true. Please circle the correct number.

A. I get enough inservice training.

1 2 3 4 5

B. I would like more planned inservice.

1 2 3 4 5

C. I would like to see more training tapes.

1 2 3 4 5

D. I would like more written material.

1 2 3 4 5

E. I would like more guest speakers.

1 2 3 4 5

F. Suggestions for Inservice topics are:

a. Nutrition	1	2	3	4	5
b. Safety	1	2	3	4	5
c. Talking to parents	1	2	3	4	5
d. Effective discipline of children	1	2	3	4	5
e. Positive reinforcement	1	2	3	4	5
f. Staff relations	1	2	3	4	5
g. Legal issues	1	2	3	4	5
h. Center rules and regulations	1	2	3	4	5

i. Other: _____

Appendix D: Professionalism and Teaching Strategy Checklist

_____ _____

Name of Staff Member Date

The staff member will be rated by the director and the administrative assistant by marking a "yes" or "no" answer to each statement. Affirmative answers are valued as attainment of the desired objective.

Professionalism

YES NO

--- --- 1. Staff member encourages parents to share pertinent information about the child; respects confidential nature family relationships.

--- --- 2. Views parents as the child's primary source of affection.

--- --- 3. Helps parents anticipate the child's next area of development.

--- --- 4. Helps parents feel confident; does not judge parent.

--- --- 5. Works in partnership with parents; communicates regularly to build mutual understanding and consistency.

--- --- 6. Is sensitive to the demands of school in relation to children's home lives.

--- --- 7. Communicates problems to the director when necessary.

--- --- 8. Respects children's emotions and bodies and expresses healthy accepting attitudes toward bodily functions.

Teaching Strategies

YES NO

YES	NO		
---	---	9.	Prepares environment for learning through active exploration of the environment.
---	---	10.	Provides a variety of age appropriate materials.
---	---	11.	Organizes children into small informal groups most of the time.
---	---	12.	Provides concrete learning activities with materials and people relevant to their own life experiences.
---	---	13.	Interacts with children frequently: moves among groups of children to facilitate their involvement with materials by asking questions, offering suggestions or adding more complex material or ideas to a situation.
---	---	14.	Recognizes that children learn from self directed problem solving and experimentation: does not need a particular correct answer.
---	---	15.	Recognizes that routine tasks of living are important opportunities to help children learn.
---	---	16.	Children are praised for their accomplishments and helped to feel increasingly competent.

Appendix E: Results of Staff Inservice Survey

Table 5

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Total
A.	0	2	2	6	12	
B.	1	2	12	5	3	
C.	3	3	3	9	5	
D.	0	4	7	8	3	
E.	0	0	2	9	10	
Totals	4	11	26	37	33	

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Total
F.						
a.	2	3	7	7	1	
b.	2	0	5	12	4	
c.	1	0	5	5	12	
d.	1	0	1	5	16	
e.	1	0	1	6	15	
f.	0	3	9	7	4	
g.	0	5	6	5	7	
h.	0	3	9	5	6	
Totals	7	14	43	52	65	

Appendix F: Revised Orientation Guide

1. Personnel materials are given to employee.
2. Mentor is assigned, given notebook.
3. Tour is given by administrator or mentor.
4. Week by week orientation begins.

Weeks #1 and #2 are spent reviewing classroom management and problems that have arisen in the classroom. the subtopics for discussion, review and demonstration are: group needs versus individual needs, necessity of establishing routines, use of transitional activities, voice level of staff member, learning to give positive directions, communication among staff while in the classroom. A pretest of the professionalism and teaching strategy checklist may be given.

Week #3 will be spent reading pertinent materials and by having discussions with the mentor. The third week will also be used for the director to evaluate the progress of the new employee in the area of classroom management.

Week #4 will be spent reviewing daily routines and schedules such as greeting children and parents, early morning activities, circle times, meal routines, toilet routines, nap time, day end closing.

Week #5 will be spent learning such necessary record keeping as daily attendance, nap charts, meal counts,

medication forms, bathroom charts, and skill assessments.

Weeks #6 and #7 will be spent on the checklist topic of professionalism. Subtopics are: confidentiality, non-judgmental attitudes, constructive communication among staff, relating pertinent problems to the proper authority and proper parent staff communications.

Week #8 will be devoted to duties outside the classroom. Snack clean up, staff meeting attendance, community area clean up, parent education bulletin board and closing of center are subtopics.

Week #9 will be used to educate and train the new staff members in the area of the center's purpose, goals, and philosophy which are listed in the parent handbook. The concept of encouraging a positive self image in individual children will be related to everyday routines and to developmentally appropriate teaching strategies.

Week #10 will be spent evaluating the effectiveness of the orientation.

7. A posttest of the professional and teaching strategy checklist will be given.

8. The inservice questionnaire will be administered.

Appendix G: Professionalism and Teaching Strategy Results

Table 6

	Posttest			Pretest		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
1	18	11	29	10	19	29
2	23	6	29	17	12	29
3	21	8	29	9	20	29
4	17	12	29	8	21	29
5	25	4	29	13	16	29
6	21	8	29	10	19	29
7	23	6	29	13	16	29
8	28	1	29	22	7	29
9	19	10	29	13	16	29
10	22	7	29	13	16	29
11	25	4	29	10	19	29
12	20	9	29	11	18	29
13	23	6	29	11	18	29
14	24	5	29	11	18	29
15	22	7	29	12	17	29
Totals	357	107	464	204	260	464
Change	153	-97				
Percent	32.97%	-32.97%				